

CLAIMS

1. A data-providing apparatus having a recording area corresponding to a data-processing apparatus and designed to supply the data recorded in the recording area to the data-processing apparatus, said data-providing apparatus comprising:

control means for controlling the recording of the data transmitted from the data-processing apparatus, into the recording area;

determining means for determining whether the data should be supplied to another data-processing apparatus in response to a demand made by the data-processing apparatus; and

data-supplying means for supplying the data to the other data-processing apparatus in response to the demand made by the other data-processing apparatus when the determining means determines that the data should be supplied to the other data-processing apparatus.

2. The data-providing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising thumbnail-generating means for generating a thumbnail corresponding to the data, and thumbnail-transmitting means for transmitting the thumbnail to the other data-processing apparatus.

3. The data-providing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said determining means further determines whether the data should be paid for its use, when the data is supplied to the other data-processing apparatus.

4. The data-providing apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said

determining means further determines the fee for the data when the data is supplied to the other data-processing apparatus.

5. The data-providing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said fee is an amount that the data-processing apparatus needs to pay to the other data-processing apparatus when the data is supplied to the other data-processing apparatus.

6. A data-providing method of supplying the data recorded in a recording area corresponding to a data-processing apparatus, to the data-processing apparatus, said data-providing method comprising the steps of:

controlling the recording of the data transmitted from the data-processing apparatus, into the recording area;

determining whether the data should be supplied to another data-processing apparatus in response to a demand made by the data-processing apparatus; and

supplying the data to the other data-processing apparatus in response to the demand made by the other data-processing apparatus when it is determined in the step of determining that the data should be supplied to the other data-processing apparatus.

7. A program-storing medium which stores a computer-readable program, the program being for use in a data providing apparatus having a recording area corresponding to a data-processing apparatus and designed to supply data recorded in the recording area to the data-processing apparatus, the program performs the steps of:

controlling the recording of the data transmitted from the data-processing

apparatus, into the recording area;

determining whether the data should be supplied to another data-processing apparatus in response to a demand made by the data-processing apparatus; and

supplying the data to the other data-processing apparatus in response to the demand made by the other data-processing apparatus when it is determined in the step of determining that the data should be supplied to the other data-processing apparatus.

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